Learning to teach: Needs analysis for a KFL teacher training program - Australian survey

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Learning to Teach:
Needs Analysis for a KFL Teacher Training Program[1]
- Australian Survey -

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신성철· 백진. 2002. 호주 교사 연수 훈련 과정에 대한 요구 분석, *외국어로서의 한국어 교육* 27 권, 169-203. 본 연구는 호주 내 교사 훈련 프로그램의 개설 논의와 관련하여, 2001 년 8 월 부터 10 월까지 호주 뉴사우스웨일즈주 (주도: 시드니)내의 초중고교에서 한국어를 가르치는 한국어 교사를 대상으로 실시한 설문조사 내용을 분석한 것이다. 조사의 목적은 크게 세 가지였는 바, 1) 현재 한국어를 가르치는 교사들의 교육배경과 교육경험 등 기본적인 인적 사항을 파악하고, 2) 교사 훈련 프로그램의 필요성과 그 형태 및 수업 전달 방법과 조직 등에 대한 선호도를 알아보며, 3) 중요시 여기는 훈련 학습 분야와 선호하는 학습 스타일을 파악하기 위함이다.

본 조사 연구 결과가 시사하는 바는 첫째, 비한국계 교사들은 언어훈련을 통해 한국어 능력을 향상시키는데 더 많은 관심을 가지고 있는 반면, 한국계 교사들은 교육방법론과 교재 개발 등 언어교육에 관련된 이론과 실제적 지식을 얻는데 더 관심을 두고 있는 듯하다. 둘째, 훈련 프로그램은 학습량이 부담되거나 연구 요소가 포함되는 단기의 석사과정형식보다는 준석사 교사자격코스처럼 학점이 인정되는 연수 형식의 프로그램을 통해 언어교육에 대한 지식을 새롭게 하는 동시에 교사자격을 상급으로 높이는 단계적이고 지속적인 프로그램으이 바람직한 것으로 보인다. 셋째, 교사들의 바쁜 일과나 거리, 비용 및 효율성을 고려하여 평소 학기 중에는 인터넷이나 통신 등을 활용하는 원거리 교육방법을 취하고 방학중 일정 기간은 캠퍼스 내에서 수업을 받도록 하는 프로그램이 바람직하다고 할 수 있다. 넷째, 코스 구성에 있어 이론과 실제를 적절히 배합하되, 이론을 실제 응용하고 실습하게 하는 학습과제에 더 중점을 두어 실용적인 코스가 되게 할 필요가 있다.

이 조사 연구는 호주의 경우에 국한한 것으로, 비슷한 환경에 있는 다른 지역 한국어 교사연구기관에서 참고 자료로 활용할 수 있겠으나, 다른 환경에서는 그에 맞는 조사연구가 이루어진 후 프로그램이 개설되어야 할 것이다. (뉴사우스웨일즈 대학교)

1. INTRODUCTION

The intimate relationship between learning and teaching is generally inevitable. This is because 'good teaching' largely comes from 'good learning', which is expressed as training or education in a professional context. The opposite is also true. More often than not, 'good students' are the products of good teaching, and a 'good teacher' continues to cultivate himself or herself as a professional. One might be involved in teaching without training. When they are separated, however, the power of the educational value is diminished or minimized. This universal feature of learning and teaching is specifically applicable to foreign language teachers, who need to constantly update their language skills, their knowledge about the target country, and the ever-evolving teaching methodologies. If we look into the Korean language teaching in New South Wales schools, we find a number of areas that need to be improved as pointed out in Shin (2001), and one of them is the lack of systematic and proper teacher training program in Korean. For this and other legitimate reasons, there have been occasional debates in recent times among secondary and tertiary personnel on a possible teacher training and education program[2]. It is timely and necessary to investigate the training needs and preferences perceived by the Korean language teaching community, which will provide significant information for the better organization and conduct of a training program.

For the establishment of a teacher training program, Woodward (1994: 164) proposes four external elements that must be taken into account: the course (e.g. methodology, materials); people (e.g. trainee, trainer); intangibles (aims, belief); and tangibles (external conditions). Cho (1997: 126-9) suggests a direction for the development of a KFL teacher training/education program in Korea in three aspects: modelling (e.g. a model KFL teacher education program); methodology (e.g. training methods, materials); and support system (e.g. policies, governmental support). For the development of competence in foreign language teaching, Wallace (1993: 49) proposes the Reflective Model where professional competence is achieved by repeating practice and reflection with the received and experiential inputs. There could be various models and emphases, from which a KFL teacher training / education program can adapt or modify. But it is important to contextualize the training model, and for this it is necessary to identify the local needs.

This paper describes the results of a survey study (August -October, 2001) that was designed to investigate the needs of practising and potential teachers of Korean as a foreign language (KFL) in relation to the recent debate on teacher training and education program in the Australian educational community. The aims of the survey are:

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[2] The term 'training' here refers to a short-term 're-training' program organised for the practising teachers who wish to update their knowledge and skills, find ways of solving their teaching problems and take opportunities to exchange views on various issues with regard to Korean language teaching through, for example, an in-service program. The term 'education', on the other hand, refers to a 'qualifying education' program offered for teacher trainees who have no or little teaching experiences and who wish to obtain teaching qualifications through, for example, a DipEd, GradDip or Master's program. The terms are similarly defined in other studies (eg. Curriculum Development for Korean Language Teacher Education Programs: A Final Report, Korean Language Promotion Council, Seoul: Korean Language Promotion Foundation, 2001. p 28).

1) To find out the background information about the practising and potential KFL teachers with regard to various items relevant to their professional careers;

2) To ascertain the necessity of a teacher training and education program in KFL and the preferences with regard to its type, delivery mode and physical organization; and

3) To identify the areas of study that are perceived as important and the learning styles that the KFL teachers might like to utilize in their learning.

The Results section presents important profiles about the subjects and a number of data that have been analysed, such as necessity of a training program; preferred type of program; perceived importance of updating; reason for the interest; preferred delivery mode; preferred class time; preferred class grouping; perceived important study areas; and preferred learning styles, all of which are presented in table format with detailed descriptions for each analysis. Some key issues relating to the results are discussed, making some suggestions for possible actions to be taken.

2. METHODS

2.1. Data Gathering Methods

Initially, this study planned to gather data by using a combination of survey and interview methods, but due to time and other restraints such as difficulty of access to subjects, a decision was made to use only the survey method so that data could be collected quickly and economically. The survey was conducted over two-month period from mid-August to October, 2001. The survey questionnaires were initially distributed to the participants of a KOLSA[3] meeting held in August in Sydney, where we obtained a dozen responses. The questionnaires were then mailed out with self-addressed stamped reply envelopes to the addresses of the respondents that we obtained from a Korean language consultant who was working at the New South Wales (NSW) Department of Education. In total, 59 responses were received and the characteristics of the respondents are presented with a detailed profile in the next chapter.

2.2. Design of Survey Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire contains a cover letter and three main sections. The three sections are as follows: Section 1 contains 12 questions about the personal background of the respondent; Section 2 contains 9 questions about the necessity of a teacher education program, and the preferences in its type, delivery method and physical organization. Section 3 contains 3 questions about the areas of study that the respondents are interested in and their preferred learning styles. Questions in Sections 1 and 2 used four-point

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3 Formed recently, it stands for Korean Language and Studies Association whose memberships are mainly primary and secondary school teachers of Korean in the Sate of New South Wales.

scale, and Section 3 used numbering methods. Blank spaces were given in Sections 2 and 3 so that respondents could supply their own reasons. The last section contained an open-ended question, where the respondents could give their own opinions and suggestions. We believe that this open-ended question can quite appropriately complement the results of the survey and compensate for the lack of interview data.

Data collection and interpretation from questionnaire will always involve a certain degree of inaccuracy. The questionnaire depended upon the willingness of respondents to give their own opinions and discuss issues relating to a possible teacher training and education program. Particular care was taken in translating the responses to avoid ambiguity. A possible threat to the validity of the investigation may lie in the mixture of the subject groups and the lack of cross-analysis of the responses. The aim of this survey, however, was to ascertain general views on a teacher education program and the perceived needs and preferences from the Korean language teaching community in NSW Schools.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Profile of the Subjects

In this section, personal information of survey respondents is presented. Twelve questions were put to the respondents, and the findings are presented under nine headings below.

1) First Language

The first language of the subjects was mainly Korean (58%) or English (36%). Out of the 59 respondents in total, there were only two bilinguals of Korean and English, and two native speakers of other languages – 1 German and 1 Arabic. This means that more than half the respondents were native speakers of Korean, who had probably migrated to Australia, and more than one third of the respondents were English native speaking teachers of Korean. The bilinguals might be Australian born 2nd generation Korean teachers.

Table 1. Profile of the Subjects: First Language

First language	No.	%
Korean	34	58
English	21	36
Bilingual	2	3
Other	2	3
Total	59	100

2) Residential Status

All the subjects in this study were either Australian citizens or permanent residents. There were no international students or visitors who participated in the survey. Our initial idea was to include a group of subjects residing in Korea for the purpose of making a comparison, but a decision was made to rely only on the Australian group due to the difficulty of access to Korean subjects.

Table 2. Residential Status

Residential status	No.	%
Australians / permanent residents	59	100
International students /visitors	0	0
Korean residents in Korea	0	0
Other	0	0

3) Age Distribution

As Table 3 shows, the subjects are marked by a relatively even distribution of three age groups, with 32% being 20 - 34 years old, 31% being 35 – 44 years old, and 37% being 45 – 54 years old. This age distribution in the survey is quite typical in the Australian working community and in the Korean community in Australia, which has a relative short immigration history. It is important to remember that the Korean working population in Sydney and other parts of Australia is demographically younger than other ethnic groups. It is made up of a group of arrivals who have come as immigrants at a young age, as well as their 1.5th or 2nd generation children who now actively participate in the professional workforce.

Table 3. Profile of the Subjects: Age Group

Age Group	No.	%
20-34	19	32
35-44	18	31
45-54	22	37
55 or over	0	0
Total	59	100

4) Gender

Out of the 59 respondents, 45 (76%) were female and 14 (24%) were male, which reflects the approximate proportion of the Australian school teachers in gender. This is similar to other teaching community in the Western world where female school teachers are a proportionately larger group.

Table 4. Profile of the Subjects: Gender

Gender	No.	%
Female	45	76
Male	14	24
Total	59	100

5) Occupation

In terms of their full-time occupation, 66% of the respondents were involved in teaching on a full-time basis; 12% were in other lines of professional work; 10% were in home duties (i.e homemakers) and 5% were involved in study of one sort or another, while nearly 7% were not in any distinct full-time occupation. These figures suggest that the majority (78%) of the teachers are professionals in their own field and a high proportion of them are full-time teachers teaching Korean along with their other subjects.

Table 5. Profile of the Subjects: Occupation

Occupation (F/T)	No.	%
Teacher	39	66
Company employee	7	12
Home Duties	6	10
Student	3	5
Other	4	7
Total	59	100

6) Education

The number of respondents with tertiary education is very high, with 53% holding a postgraduate degree, followed by 42% with an undergraduate degree, as shown in Table 6. Given that 12% of the general Sydney population has a tertiary qualification of some form (ABS, *Community Profile*[4]), the respondents display quite unusual characteristics in terms of educational levels. However, this again seems to reflect the profile of teaching profession and the educational profile of Korean population in both Australia and Korea.

Table 6. Profile of the Subjects: Education

Education Level	No.	%
Postgraduate degree	31	53
Undergraduate degree	25	42
Other	3	5
Total	59	100

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Australian Government Printing Service (AGPS), 2001.

7) Teaching Qualification

Of the respondents in the study, 46% held an Australian Diploma of Education (DipEd)[5]; 29% the Korean Teacher's Certificate; and 14% were qualified with both. However, 12% of the respondents were teaching Korean without any teaching qualification or simply with a sessional certificate. These figures suggest that a high proportion of the teachers were properly qualified[6] but a considerable proportion (41%) of the teachers were still not 'qualified' with Australian teaching qualifications, which are normally required for teaching at schools. This figure can be explained by the fact that some teachers might have taught Korean on a part-time basis on Saturday mornings through the Saturday School of Community Languages (SSCL)[7] or similar modes, where Australian teaching qualifications may not have been a requirement. At the same time, this high number of unqualified teachers provides teacher training / education program developers with a rationale to consider the establishment of such a program.

Table 7. Profile of the Subjects: Teaching Qualification

Qualification	No	%
Australian DipEd	27	46
Korean Teacher's Certificate	17	29
Both DipEd and KTC	8	14
Certificate	2	3
Nil	5	9
Total	59	100*

*% rounded

8) Major Study Area

The majority of the respondents (48%) had studied a language or literature as their major study, followed by science or maths (10%), sociology or politics (5%) and history or culture (2%). For 36%, however, none of these disciplines were part of their major study areas. It is impossible to know the other areas from the present survey, but they could include other Humanities and non-Humanities such as Education, Business Management or Nursing, udging from our general knowledge about the Korean community in Sydney.

Table 8. Profile of the Subjects: Major Study Area

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5 It is an academic qualification that is required for those who want to become a full-time teacher in the Australian school system. It normally requires a year of full-time study in addition to a Bachelor degree. Also, we are advised that there is an overseas qualification 'transfer' course offered through the Department of Education training program.

6 The terms 'qualified' and 'unqualified' are often a matter of arguments. They are used here in everyday sense, i.e. whether holding a government-approved teaching qualification or not.

7 It is a government-run school system where community languages like Korean are taught in one regional school (called Centre) on Saturdays throughout the school terms. Background speaker Korean courses are mostly offered through this School.

Major Study Area	No.	%
Language / Literature	28	48
Science / Maths	6	10
Sociology / Politics	3	5
History / Culture	1	2
Other	21	36
Total	59	100*

* % rounded

9) Teaching Experiences

When asked how long they have taught in a formal school system including that of Korea, 37% of the respondents answered 11years or more, followed by 29% for 5-10 years, and 20% for 5 years or less.   14%, however, had no formal teaching experience. 32% had been teaching for 11years or more in the Australian school system, followed by 27% for 5-10years, 15% for 5 years or less, while 22% had no teaching experience in Australian schools. The majority of the respondents had been teaching Korean as a foreign or second language (KFL/KSL) for less than 5 years (59%), followed by 5 to 10 years (25%).   Less than 2 % had taught KFL or KSL for more than 10 years, reflecting the relatively short history of Korean language education in Australia. 14% of the respondents had no previous teaching experience in KFL or KSL.   These figures suggest that the majority of the respondents had many years of teaching experience in a school system but that there are still quite a good number of teachers or potential teachers that need training (or more experience) appropriate for teaching Korean in the Australian school environment.

Table 9. Profile of the Subjects: Teaching Experiences

Teaching Experiences / Length	Total formal experiences (%)	In Australian schools (%)	Formal KFL/ KSL (%)
11 years or more	22 (37)	19 (32)	1 (2)
5-10 years	17 (29)	16 (27)	15 (25)
Less than 5 years	12 (20)	9 (15)	35 (59)
Nil	8 (14)	13 (22)	8 (14)
Not answered		2 (3)	
Total	59 (100)	59 (100*)	59 (100)

*% rounded.

Based on the above information about the Australian subjects, the average profile of the respondents can be summarised as:

(1) Between mature adulthood and middle-age;

(2) Engaged in teaching or professional work;
(3) Having Korean or English as their first language;
(4) Having language and other disciplinary areas as their major;
(5) Overall, well educated;
(6) Having a good many years of teaching experience but in many cases still lacking training and experience for teaching in Australian schools.

This background information will be further referred to in the next section, where the main findings of the present survey are presented.

3.2. Assessment, Desire and Organization

1) Necessity of a Teacher Training and Education Program (TEP)

To ascertain the need of a teacher training / education program, the respondents were first asked to what extent they felt it necessary to set up a well-structured TEP in Korean. As shown in Table 10, 36% of the respondents answered 'absolutely necessary', followed by 59% responding 'necessary'. Only one respondent felt it was 'unnecessary'. Therefore, the overwhelming majority (95%) gave strong support for a well-organized KFL teacher training / education program.   This figure clearly shows the necessity of such a program in Australia, with initial focus on New South Wales.

Table 10. Necessity of a KFL Teacher Education Program

Necessity	No.	%
Absolutely necessary	21	36
Necessary	35	59
Unnecessary	1	2
Absolutely unnecessary	0	0
Do not know	2	3
Total	59	100

The respondents were then asked to give their reasons for the assessment, and in support of their opinions, they made various comments.   For many respondents, teacher training or education was believed to be necessary because it would give them practical opportunities to update their knowledge and skills, as shown in the following comments:

• Updating Korean teaching skills.
• To broaden knowledge.
• To refresh and update.
• Methodology to teach Korean.
• Developing language materials and teaching methods.

Some respondents believed that constant training is needed to maintain their professionalism and to become better teachers, and they justified this by raising points such as:

- Professionalism.
- Most teachers need [it].
- Teach the right things.
- Providing diversity of learning for students.
- To ensure that Korean language is taught by well trained teachers.

Still to some other respondents, it was an opportunity to obtain or upgrade their teaching qualifications in order to teach in Australian schools. Such opinions include:

- To upgrade teachers' qualifications.
- If KFL is to succeed, you need articulated, trained teachers.
- Must have a formal qualification from Australian-based education [educational institutions] to understand Aust [Australian] background.

An infrastructure that can organise, coordinate and assist was of concern to some respondents, who made such comments as:

- As there is no common structure to control all different org [organizations].
- More structure can assist programming.
- Difficult to teach /enthuse students unless well structured and resourced.
- As a teacher not trained in language teaching, I would like to be able to get assistance…

One respondent, however, was critical about setting up such a program without competent teacher trainers, by saying, "Without a great teacher /leader an education program won't be improved." As a whole, their strong support can be summarised on the basis of their desires as: to update their skills and knowledge as part of their professional development; to have a formal training for appropriate or better qualifications, and to have an infrastructural organization for better coordination and assistance.

2) Type of the Program

The majority of the respondents (63%) thought that a 'seasonal in-service' training program would be most necessary and desirable, while 22% supported the idea of setting up a Graduate Diploma program. Only one respondent felt it necessary to offer a Master's degree program. This figure suggests that more than half the respondents had already obtained a postgraduate degree such as Graduate Diploma or Master's, as seen in Table 6, so they might have felt that an in-service program would be enough to update their knowledge and that taking another postgraduate program was not their priority. On the other hand, many of those who did not obtain a degree at the postgraduate level (over 42% in Table 6) and who was not qualified with a Diploma of Education (over 30%

in Table 7) saw the necessity and desirability of offering a Graduate Diploma as a mode of TEP.

Table 11. Type of the Program: Necessity and Desirability

Type of the Program	No.	%
Seasonal in-service	37	63
Graduate Diploma	13	22
Master's degree	1	2
Other	2	3
Not answered	6	10
Total	59	100

Some respondents regarded a seasonal in-service program "as a basic qualification" and as a desirable model for practical reasons such as time and convenience, as in the following comments:

- Limited time.
- More convenient.
- Many of teachers are volunteers and employed …during the week.
- As it is a Saturday school, it should be short-term…

For other respondents, an in-service program is a good option because it can give them an opportunity not only to update their knowledge and skills on an on-going basis, but more importantly to share their experiences with other colleagues and to get stimulated by constant contacts and new developments.   The following comments point this out:

- It provides ongoing training and collegial support.
- Keep[s] teachers fresh up to date.
- To keep in touch with teaching methods /refresh Korean speaking.
- To improve the quality of education and maintain interest.
- Need constant contact with others in teaching fields.
- Increase knowledge /mixing with others who teach Korean.
- To bring together teachers teaching the same program.
- I found the Korean workshops stimulating and continued to provide enthusiasm and impetus to my teaching of Korean.
- To improve quality teaching.
- More knowledge and professionalism.

Those who wanted more substantial training (e.g. Graduate Diploma or Master's) beyond an in-service program expressed their needs, commenting:

- Needs 1 yr to learn theory, Korean linguistics and methodology.
- More practical use of language, direct contact with lecturers, [and] in-depth explanations more likely.

Therefore, we see from their comments that the respondents wished to have some form of training where they could enjoy learning and a collegial link in a rather relaxed manner, while others wished to pursue more formal and in-depth training. TEP developers will need to bear in mind these two important points.

3) Importance of Updating and Upgrading

To ascertain the perceived view on updating and upgrading, the respondents were asked how important it was for their current and future career development to update their knowledge and skills, or to upgrade their qualifications in KFL. The absolute majority (83%) saw the importance by answering 'very important' (36%) and 'important' (48%). 15% of the respondents, however, said that it was no longer important for them. The positive figures show how serious the respondents were about teaching Korean as their profession.

Table 12. Importance of Updating and Upgrading

Importance	No.	%
Very important	21	36
Important	28	48
Not important	9	15
Do not know	1	2
Total	59	100*

*% rounded.

4) Interest in Updating or Upgrading

When asked whether the respondents were more interested in updating their knowledge and skills, or further upgrading their qualifications, 49% of them said that they were interested in both updating and upgrading, followed by 36% interested in updating only as shown in Table 13. Less than 9% showed an interest in upgrading qualifications, which was surprising though consistent with findings shown in Tables 6, 7 and 11. These figures enhance other findings in the present study in relation to the desirable type of the program and thus provide TEP developers with a better idea about how the curriculum should be organized and structured.

Table 13. Interest in Updating or Upgrading

Interest	No.	%
Updating knowledge and skills	21	36
Upgrading teaching qualifications	5	9
Both updating and upgrading	29	49
Neither	4	7
Total	59	100*

*% rounded

5) Delivery Method of the Program

The delivery method will be one of the concerns that both participants and organizers of a KFL teacher training / education program may have due to the practical reasons such as the residential location and the busy schedule of the participants. There have been enormous developments in technology-based distance education (TDE) in the past ten years. The preferred delivery method will depend on where the participant live and their individual circumstances, but we expect that there will be an overall preference for programs that could accommodate individual situations. To find out what preference is ascribed to the delivery method of the program, the respondents were asked to choose their preferred method and they were given the opportunity to state other methods. The majority (61%) of the respondents gave their support for a combination of 'on campus' and 'TDE' as their preferred delivery method for the program. The proportion of those who preferred either of these two options was nearly equal, with 17% preferring 'on campus' mode and 19% preferring 'distance education', as shown in Table 14 below.

Table 14. Preferred Delivery Method of the Program

Delivery method	No.	%
On campus	10	17
Technology-based distance education	11	19
Combination of both	36	61
Other	2	3
Total	59	100

6) Preferred Class Time

To the question of preferred class times, the respondents equally preferred to have the program either in the evening (31%) or during the school holidays (31%) as shown in Table 15. A relatively small proportion of the respondents preferred daytime classes (22%), and the weekend option was supported by only 12%. These figures suggest that the majority of the respondents preferred the program to be offered outside normal working hours and days due to work commitments, while some, while some, who were probably residing in the Sydney area and perhaps free from daytime commitment, wished to enrol in a normal daytime course.

Table 15. Preferred Class Time of the Program

Class time	No.	%
Evening	18	31
School holidays	18	31
Daytime	13	22

Weekends	7	12
Not answered	3	5
Total	59	100*

*% rounded

7) Preferred Class Grouping

When the participants of a teacher training / education program have different language and cultural backgrounds, grouping the class will be another issue for the program managers. When the respondents were asked to indicate their preferences on class grouping, the majority of the respondents (64%) preferred to have the class grouped by language proficiency irrespective of their cultural background, while 22% supported the idea of having a mixed group where participants with different backgrounds are mixed. Only 12% wanted to be grouped by nationality. These figures suggest that there could be some common courses that could be taught in a language the participants feel comfortable with, but some other courses (e.g. language skill courses) will need to be divided according to the characteristics and needs of the participants.

Table 16. Preferred Class Grouping

Class grouping	No.	%
By language proficiency	38	64
By nationality	7	12
A mixed group	13	22
Not answered	1	2
Total	59	100

As a whole, the figures presented above highlight following few points. The absolute majority of the respondents:

(1) Strongly felt that a teacher education program in KFL was necessary;
(2) Thought that it would be desirable if the program is a seasonal in-service training, which can eventually lead to a Graduate Diploma for those who want to obtain the qualification;
(3) Considered it important to update their knowledge and skills, and to upgrade their qualifications for their career development;
(4) Expressed their interest in a program that can both update and upgrade, but had little interest in a program just for upgrading qualifications;
(5) Preferred a program composed of both a technology-based distance education and on-campus mode that can be offered during the school holidays or in the evening; and
(6) Preferred the classes to be grouped largely by language proficiency.

Some of these findings will be further discussed in the next section that presents the respondents' opinions and preferences with regard to study areas and learning styles.

3.3 Areas of Study and Learning Styles

In this section, we wanted to obtain opinions about the areas of study that the respondents might be interested in and the learning styles that they might enjoy.   We believed that these items of information would be useful in considering the components of curriculum and the pedagogical approach.

1) Areas of Study

It would be desirable and necessary to see how the respondents rate the importance and relevance of the courses to be offered in the program.   To find out the importance ascribed to various disciplinary courses, respondents were asked to indicate their opinions by choosing from the twelve pre-set areas of study, the five most important areas for the program, ranking them in the order of importance.   The respondents considered 'Korean language skills' to be the most important (54%), followed by 'methodology and curriculum development', 'Korean society, culture and history', and 'Korean grammar'. The reason for the Korean language skills taking the highest priority seems to be due to the fact that among the respondents there were a considerable number of non-native speakers of Korean (36%), who might want to improve their language proficiency in Korean.   Also there may have been a number of native speakers of Korean who regarded the language proficiency as the most important value to a teacher of the language.   On the other hand, both native and non-native speakers of Korean seem to have highly valued the importance of all the other key areas of study such as 'methodology and curriculum development' [8] .   The importance perceived by the respondents, however, was minimal or relatively minor in such areas as 'technology and language education', 'Korean culture workshop', 'Australian school education', 'in-country training', 'second language acquisition theory', 'practicum' and 'English language skills'.   In fact, the importance of a research component in the program was nil, which supports again other findings in the previous sections, where an in-service training (therefore coursework) was much preferred.   Table 17 below shows the four most important areas of study (underlined) chosen by the respondents along with the aggregated total.

Table 17. Perceived Importance of Study Areas

Study Areas	1st (%)	2nd (%)	3rd (%)	Total
Korean language skills	32 (54%)	4 (7%)	1 (2%)	37 (63%)
Methodology and curriculum development	13 (22)	14 (24)	4 (7)	31 (53)
Korean society, culture and history	1 (2)	13 (22)	14 (24)	28 (48)

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8 See Choe (1997), who emphasizes the positive role of a teacher as a developer of teaching materials and curriculum.

Korean grammar	0	13 (22)	8 (14)	21 (36)
Technology and language education	4 (7)	3 (5)	6 (10)	13 (22)
Korean culture workshop	0	4 (7)	7 (12)	11 (19)
In-country training	2 (3)	0	7 (12)	9 (15)
Second language acquisition theory	0	2 (3)	3 (5)	5 (9)
Practicum	1 (2)	0	2 (3)	3 (5)
English language skills	0	2 (3)	1 (2)	3 (5)
Research project	0	0	0	0

Apart from those areas of study selected from the pre-set list above, some respondents emphasized their individual needs by adding other areas of study or by further explaining the items in the list.

- Auditory language (listening).
- Music, dance.
- Technology curriculum development.
- Desperate need for in-country training.
- I felt that my trip to Korea gave me the greatest insight and stimulus to my teaching.

While making efforts to cater for collective needs, it will be desirable to take into account – and, where possible, make provisions for - the individual needs as well, however small in number.

2) Preferred Learning Styles

Although there is no single best approach in language teaching and learning, there are a number of strategies and approaches that can bring an effective outcome, so the learning process will be both enjoyable and beneficial. Individual learners tend to have their own learning strategies. Once we know their favourite learning styles, whether individual or collective, the learning package will be better organized and as a result a better learning outcome will be expected.

To find out how the respondents learn best, seven types of learning styles were put to them. They were asked to rate the items in their order of preference. The respondents said that they would learn best by participating in a 'hands-on' workshop' (36%), group discussions (31%) or by attending lectures (24%). Regular assignments, seminar presentations and research projects were less popular, probably due to the fear of increased workload or the lack of training in those areas. Table 18 below presents the details of preferred learning styles with three most popular ones underlined.

Table 18. Preferred Learning Styles

Learning Styles	1st (%)	2nd (%)	3rd (%)	Total
'Hands-on' workshop	21 (36%)	12 (20%)	9 (15%)	42 (71%)
Group discussions	8 (14)	18 (31)	13 (22)	39 (67)
Lecture	14 (24)	5 (9)	12 (20)	31 (53)
Regular learning tasks	9 (15)	11 (19)	9 (15)	29 (49)
Seminar presentations	3 (5)	8 (14)	8 (14)	19 (33)
Research project	2 (3)	2 (3)	2 (3)	6 (9)

To sum up, the respondents saw the greatest value in developing language proficiency in Korean more than anything else, and this could be the desire of the non-native speaker teachers of Korean at large. Other areas of study with relatively strong support could be core courses for both native and non-native speaker teachers. Other study areas such as 'technology and language education', 'Australian school education' and 'in-country training', which had individual support, could be offered as options to meet individual needs and interest. In terms of the learning styles, the respondents wished to enjoy practical courses where they could share various teaching experiences through 'hands-on' workshops or group discussions, along with some theoretical input from lectures where they could be exposed to new ideas in language teaching and learning. It will be desirable to utilize the less popular learning strategies also, though on a lesser scale, rather than excluding them completely.

3) General Opinions and Suggestions

The respondents had the opportunity to make other comments or suggestions in relation to the possible teacher education program. The comments and suggestions they gave were mixed. Some respondents expressed their wish to maintain constant contacts with other teachers of Korean and the Korean community, through, for example, regular workshops in order to maintain their momentum.

- Regular contact opportunities amongst people interested in Korean teaching in general.
- I have learnt a great deal by using organization of [i.e. through the educational provisions made over] past years. As a country teacher, contact with other Korean teachers is essential.
- The lack of a Korean workshop is starting to have a bad effect on isolated rural teachers without regular contact with any [other] teachers of Korean or any members of Korean community.

Similarly, others thought that an on-going training program was essential for their professional needs and for the survival of the Korean language program.

- Training and in-service is essential if the Korean language program is to continue.
- To a non-native Korean, training and development is essential to be able to teach Korea [Korean].   There is an increasing demand for it where I live one hour south of Gold Coast due to visiting Koreans, study groups and Korean school groups.

Practical teaching components and methods are important for learning, as emphasized in the comments relating to the importance of a hands-on activity. For people residing in country, the delivery mode was surely their concern, and they did not want to be missed out, as in the indirect request,

- "Because I am not residing in Sydney metropolitan area the mode of any course offered would need to have a distance education component."

However, some respondents wondered whether a KFL teacher education program would ever be needed, as similar qualification programs are already available.   And if there is such a need, it should target mainly native speaker teachers of Korean, as they need much teaching practice to become competent teachers in Australian schools.   This is suggested by the following:

- Is there a need for a Sydney-based KFL program?   Don't the universities already have Master of Teaching / DipEd, etc.   I imagine the main reason would be to train teachers to teach Korean Background speakers.   I don't know how many non-native speakers want to learn Korean in Sydney.   But I guess you have to start somewhere. Which comes first – the chicken or the eggs!!   Personally, a native Korean speaker training as a teacher in a NSW school needs much practice – so emphasis on Practicum – to enhance, improve knowledge of local conditions, etc. Obviously they know the language but do they know at what level they must pitch their teaching?

In spite of their interest and enthusiasm in further development through training, the enrolment numbers in Korean has disappointed some respondents, as expressed in such comments as:

- As a foreign language teacher, I am personally very interested in continuing my studies.   I learned Korean via a long-distance technology based course and a 4-week study in Korea.   The trend in my high school, however, is very disappointing. We do not get the numbers to form elective classes in the junior school.

One comment came from a primary school teacher, hoping to work together with university students whose major or background is Korean, through, for example, a teacher trainee or internship program: "I teach 5-8 years olds, so conversation Korean is suitable for me.   Perhaps Uni students and primary schools could work together."   And the need for audio-visual material in Korean was also expressed: "Need to provide audio-

visual material to enhance current education methodology, as this is an area we lack in resources." In general, the above comments were useful in that they support the findings in the preceding sections and provide additional information, which was unable to be obtained through multiple choice or numbering methods.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall, we believe that we have been able to highlight some significant points from the responses from the Australian school teachers of Korean, though the study limits itself to a general range of investigation. What follows is a number of suggestions for possible concrete plans.

First, we have received some important data about the background of the subjects, that is, the practising and potential teachers of Korean. By language background and level of schooling, there are four main groups in the teaching pool: Korean native speaker teachers for secondary Korean; non-native speakers for secondary Korean; non-native speakers for primary Korean; and native speakers for non-formal Korean. It is pleasing and promising to know that nearly all respondents are university graduates. What is surprising is the fact that more than 40% are postgraduate degree holders of a Graduate Diploma or Master's and that many of the respondents have considerable years of teaching experience. However, if we look at their teaching qualifications and teaching experiences in Korean, we find that there is a good reason to assert the need to take some actions for improvement: more than 40% of the respondents are not qualified with an Australian DipEd and more than 70% have been teaching Korean for less than 5 years. In other words, the current teaching positions are evenly composed of both qualified and unqualified teacher, and the considerable majority of teachers have started their teaching career in Korean very recently. There is another group (about 20% in this survey) teaching Korean in community-based establishments or undertaking tertiary studies. It is reasonable to take into account this potential group at the planning stage, as they are currently not equipped with appropriate teaching qualifications and teaching experiences in a formal school system. This background information tells us that there is a need to establish a professional development program focused on 'training' and 'education'. For practising teachers who are qualified with appropriate Australian teaching qualifications, a 'training' program will be desirable and sufficient, but for the unqualified groups, a 'training-style education' or a formal 'education' program will be necessary. This is supported by the fact that the largest proportion of the respondents (63%) have chosen 'seasonal in-service' as a desirable type of training program, followed by a 'Graduate Diploma' (22%). Similarly, they are much more interested in updating their knowledge and skills (36%) than upgrading teaching qualifications (9%). The most favourable form (49%), however, will be a program that can serve the two purposes at the same time. This means that the respondents expect an in-service training with approved credit points, which can lead the unqualified eventually to the completion of a Graduate Diploma program or above.

Second, the delivery method and time are also clearly indicated in the responses. It is not just desirable but necessary to utilize a combination of distance education and on-campus modes (61%) to accommodate the individual variables such as distance and time. This combination will be further facilitated by the preferable time chosen by the larger

proportion of respondents: evening (31%) and school holidays (31%).   This information leads us to an option that appears to be workable.   That is, during the semester or school term, the program should be delivered through a technology-based distance education mode two or more evenings per week, and during the school holidays, participants of the program should be required to attend the courses offered on campus to complete some components of each course.   It is too early to speculate about the desirable proportion of the weighting that might be assigned to each of the modes, but our initial suggestion would be 60-70 % of distance mode and 30-40 % of campus mode.   In this way, it will be possible to maintain an appropriate workload in the on-going study and the intensive face-to-face training.   If this arrangement works, it will be also possible to absorb the daytime and weekend options in this model, which has already been used in a number of institutions as an alternative mode of delivery for full-time employees.   What is critical here is the availability of technology-based quality resource materials and the way of organising the virtual classes on the internet.   What seems to be currently available has been reported to be inappropriate for a proper teacher training and education program due to the simplistic and unsystematic nature of the components.   While seeking ways of utilizing what might be appropriate, it will be necessary to develop a comprehensive technology package that is suitable for an Australian program and that can be adapted by other similar education environments.   Obviously, this will need funding, expertise and passion, and thus it is an area where much cooperation and mutual assistance are needed among such relevant bodies as tertiary institutions, government authorities, technology experts and sponsors.

Third, as for most other courses, there seems to be a clear need to divide the study areas into two: core and options, according to the language proficiency, training and individual needs.   Some courses should be core for one group, while being options for other groups. It is desirable and may also be necessary to have common core courses, irrespective of the language backgrounds of the participants.   This arrangement will largely accommodate their wish for the class to be grouped by language proficiency (64%) or in a mixed mode (22%).   Although it is possible to offer two or more separate streams according to language and cultural background, the reality is that for various reasons it may be neither viable nor desirable in a non-Korean speaking country like Australia to form groups in separate streams. Therefore, if we follow the core and option model, it will be possible to meet the training needs of a group and an individual, while developing the program as a sustainable one.   The allocation of core and option will largely depend on such factors as the needs of the participants, the emphasis of the program, and the availability of the expert trainers.   From the results, however, it seems to be reasonable to make initial suggestions for program developers to further examine what is appropriate. Korean language skills can or should be a core course to non-native speaker teachers, while areas such as methodology, curriculum development, Korean society, and Korean grammar can be common core courses to both groups.   Options may include such courses as Korean culture workshop, technology-based language education, Australian school education, in-country training and SLA theory.   Needless to say, a practicum should be a must for those who participate in the program as 'education' mode to obtain a DipEd, but for practising teachers in Korean, it may not be reasonable or necessary to assign it as core.   Also, it is necessary to make realistic

provisions for those who have not reached a standard level of English, and obviously such proficiency must be a basic entry requirement.

Fourth, as emphasized in the previous section, it is critical to offer a practical training and education program. The composition of theory and practice can vary depending on the nature of the course, but there must be practical components in the course, and where possible, in a larger proportion. Whatever course is offered, the lecturer-in charge or the program developers will need to take into account the proportion of theoretical and practical components, and from the results, one might like to consider 1:2 or 1:3 ratio. In other words, while providing participants with theoretical input through lectures, the course must be structured in a way that participant can learn by participating in practical tasks such as 'hands-on' workshops or small group discussions. The motto 'Experience is the best teacher' should be seen integral to the program. Also, the program should enable participants to learn by carrying out regular assignments or by preparing a seminar for presentation, and these strategies can be best utilized as part of the course components or as assessment tasks with less weight. If necessary, a small research project also can be part of the assessment components, but it might be more helpful - educationally and in terms of workload - to assign a project that can be conducted by a group of 3 or 4, rather than one person.

Through this survey study, we have attempted to provide answers to some basic questions relevant to a teacher training / education program. Although the findings are limited in the range of investigation and lacking in the cross-analysis of the responses, these could still be useful for both program developers and educational agencies in making overall plans for appropriate actions. It is hoped that this study will provide useful suggestions for the creation of a systematic high quality teacher training / education program that, in turn, might help secure the survival and prosperity of the Korean language programs in Australian schools.

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